

# BLAZE

THE SUNWAY UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

## CRISIS-PROOF EDUCATION UPSHOT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?



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# FOREWORD

## A NEW BEGINNING

FROM THE PRESIDENT

PROFESSOR SIBRANDES POPPEMA

### ***Our University is changing.***

Every day brings fresh insights and new perspectives on old challenges. As you read this, somewhere within our University new ideas and knowledge are being formed.

This issue of the Blaze magazine offers you, the reader, an understanding of the many things currently happening at the University. A sense of what we have achieved thus far, and hopefully, provide you with new knowledge about some of the achievements being achieved within our institution.

**AS I WRITE THIS MESSAGE**, staff across Sunway University are busily preparing for the year 2022 – students are getting ready to attend orientation, departments and lecturers are preparing lectures and staff are getting ready to welcome students onto our campuses for the upcoming semester. Relatively, the excitement of familiar activity makes it seem almost like any other year.

We know that it is not quite like any other year. After nearly two years of the constant COVID-19 battle, we have finally reopened our campus with increased in-person teaching, research, and other activities, giving an entirely new unique meaning to returning on campus. I want to acknowledge that even during the 2020–2021 academic year, while most of us worked remotely, essential staff continued to fulfil on-campus needs, and some lecturers offered in-person instruction when student learning outcomes could not be possible done online.

Throughout the pandemic, and especially in preparation for the reopening of on-campus activities, we have continued to work closely with the Ministry of Higher Education, to ensure the safety and well-being of our community. Therefore, we made the important decision to require vaccinations for everyone attending our campuses in person.

As much as we yearn to return to normal, we know that higher education, like most other aspects of society, will be different going forward. The transformations triggered by the pandemic – the widespread adoption of online teaching and learning; and the need to care and be kind to each other's mental health have permanently reshaped not only Sunway University's future but the future of our world more broadly.

History has shown us that times of great disruption can be an inflexion point of rare opportunity for positive change. And so, as we begin a new academic year and a new chapter in Sunway University's future, we are challenging ourselves to seek out these opportunities for enhancing our impact by leveraging the lessons we have learnt throughout the pandemic.



# CRISIS-PROOF EDUCATION UPSHOT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

Higher Education at Sunway University celebrates the upgrade in the settings of teaching and learning

Written by Hailey Chung



When the classroom sound an emergency after the COVID-19 pandemic hits, it was a complete evacuation for traditional learning at Sunway University.

A mix of stress, frantic, and perhaps a moment of "desperate times call for desperate measures" as teachers and student body left their "premise". Still, new solutions were found in the "escape room" as everyone fought to save livelihoods and education.

Sunway educators agreed that the hazard had only killed what was waning and issued a crisis-resistant teaching method for students today and tomorrow.

Associate Professor Dr Daniel Chong Ka Leong rejoiced that assessments had now largely moved from knowledge-based to problem-solving skills.

The Associate Dean for Education at the School of Hospitality and Service Management explained that the mass adoption of open book examinations from closed book examinations had put the assessment approach to focus on applied knowledge, critical thinking and problem-solving.

This was as opposed to traditional knowledge-based assessments which were mostly determined by memorising concepts and solutions, he said.

"Considering without physical monitoring of students' honesty in an examination, closed-book exams are simply irrelevant and not feasible via online. Tutorials were also used to prepare students better in dealing with a new form of assessments."

"We have revamped both the learning outcomes and assessments plan," Dr Daniel said, adding that the key to swift changes is to acknowledge that we are in crisis. "Flexibility is needed but carefully done within the principle of quality teaching and learning."

He believes that online assessment and open book exams were a good paradigm shift that will stay after the pandemic subsides. More to expect are also virtual labs and virtual simulations, and especially the exciting global classroom that would soon be a norm.

"Guest lecturing from reputable universities and industrial partners around the world will become more feasible than ever before – truly a global university," he envisioned.

Dr Daniel continued to applaud students from the class of 2020 onwards who, can be said fortunate to, fell into lab rats during the unprecedented one and a half year.

**"Students who have gone through this pandemic and yet successfully graduated are crisis-trained in almost every aspect of learning and problem-solving. Think about that! I am super proud of them," he said.**

He went on to share that these students were heavily tested in the area of patience, discipline and self-control, all of which are values that contribute to resilience.

Dr Daniel scored this reconstructed phase for all higher education institutions as not a worse period in history, but instead a robust experience and era.



Photo by Yaroslav from Pexels

## ONLINE LEARNING A BIG "HEAT"

Dr Siti Munerah from the Department of Marketing Strategy and Innovation in Sunway University Business School (SUBS) praised and celebrated the beauty of online learning.

She said that it highly catered to the presently enrolled students from Generation Z, who are technologically literate and were exposed to technology at a young age.

"Gen Zers adapted well to online learning," said Dr Munerah who is a Programme Leader of the BSc (Hons) Business Studies. In fact, she had enjoyed a closer connection with students.

"Many students were more comfortable to type in the chatbox as compared to raising their hands and vocalising in front of large crowds.

"For example, during physical classes pre-pandemic, only five students out of 250 in my lecture would have usually asked and answered any questions during the session," Dr Munerah shared.

She trusts that the better than usual interactions would fuel students' understanding of the subjects. It also allows lecturers to apprehend what students are grasping on the topics taught and delivered.

"Direct feedback can be obtained instantaneously, and lecturers are able to improve their teaching methods," she said.

Not to forget, students living in various time zones or facing online connectivity issues also appreciated the playback function for the recorded sessions after the live lecture.

Moving forward, when the lockdown to curb the spread of the virus eases up along with the decline of COVID-19 cases, students can choose between showing up via online or physical classes.

Dr Munerah highlighted that the dual options in the future will help students learn at their own pace. As compared with alumni, the current and new batch of students truly have the luxury to study in a dual-mode learning model.

"It makes the programme more attractive to working adults as well. It opens up opportunities for local universities to recruit students from different countries to enrol on their programmes.

"Sunway University is expected to maintain the dual-mode method to cater to the demands of students from different geographical areas in Malaysia and abroad post-lockdown," Dr Munerah said.

At the time of awakening, she said the University was quick to respond to the new normal by providing technology-enhanced learning workshops to all lecturers.

The equipping of staff on the use of technology for online teaching included training on-screen recording and video editing, building digital notice boards, as well as creating and designing online tests.



## GREATER OWNERSHIP IN LEARNING

The accelerated growth in the higher education sector did not just occur among the arts division. Senior Lecturer from the Department of Biological Sciences, Dr Chew Jactty stated success in the science division too.

The School of Medical and Life Sciences' Associate Dean of Education said that benefits were documented after the University adopted new ways of teaching and learning.

**"Comparing students' academic performance from the previous years, our data showed that students performed better academically compared to pre-COVID-19 days," she said.**

According to a survey conducted, Dr Jactty shared that the top keywords given by students were "time" and "flexibility" when asked about the one thing they enjoyed during the online or dual-mode semesters in 2020.

She noted and commended students who have learned to take more ownership in the new style of education. "Learning is not something done to

them but rather something they themselves do. The self-regulatory learning capabilities and skills are much needed and anticipated in online learning."

Dr Jactty also took note of students' voices regarding the loss of hands-on learning experiences. To that, she said the University had responded by keeping the door open for students to do practical training whenever allowed by the Ministry of Higher Education.

For instance, Dr Jactty's department offered a series of lab boot camps to students during the recovery movement-control order (RMCO) period enforced from the end of March to early April.

The school made every effort to minimise any time loss for learning. "Workshops, laboratory practical classes, teaching materials have been revised and simulated data were provided to support learning," she said.

"The well-developed simulated data have encouraged analytical and problem-solving skills among students.

"Subject lecturers can be creative and provide various types of interesting simulated data that otherwise cannot be obtained in face-to-face hands-on classes."

Dr Jactty deeply saluted the academic staff who embraced change so quickly and had emerged as online learning warriors. With this, she acknowledged the Academic Enhancement Division for preparing staff even before the first Movement Control Order (MCO) implemented by the government began in March last year.

"The pandemic has led to the rapid migration from face-to-face learning to 100% online or dual-mode learning, which otherwise would take ages to transpire," she said.

Dual-mode learning involves the use of technology-supported materials or activities to complement or replace in-person learning.

"The investment into online learning platforms offers students access to a large variety of courses with some degree of flexibility throughout the year," Dr Jactty said.

She did not discount that the initial stage was challenging, which prompted regular meetings held at the department level to allow staff to brainstorm and fine-tune the online strategies.

"It was not an easy job with many weekday evenings and weekends invested. The revamp of education was made possible by the dedications from all committed lecturers who are experts in their area of research," she shared.

Other efforts that Sunway University lecturers had poured in included creating WhatsApp groups and establishing Microsoft Teams groups to stay connected with students on issues and concerns during the pandemic.

All of which was not in vain because students rated their online learning experience highly, Dr Jactty encouraged.

The only constant is change. As educators reflected and evaluated on the volatile journey from pandemic-to-permanent, one thing we attest to: Though the COVID-19 pandemic may have gaslighted education and those who seek it, however, learning never stops – particularly not for the learning institutions and the learners.



# CAMPUS UPDATES

## Key recent highlights on campus



### Resume Sunway campus life with a cup of coffee

Sunway University partnered with Nestlé to provide a truly warm welcome to the returning student community when the campus reopened in mid October. Students were surprised with NESCAFÉ sponsored by Nestlé and received a 'Welcome Back' cupcake specially prepared by the Sunway University Young Chefs Club headed by Professor Patrick Siau.

### Professor Elizabeth Lee wins UN women winner award for leadership commitment to gender equality

We celebrate the big achievement of Professor Elizabeth Lee as the award winner in the Leadership Commitment category at the 2021 Malaysia Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) Awards ceremony.

At Sunway, we take great care to foster gender equality as part of our efforts to build an inclusive work environment. We will continue to advance our efforts, as we believe men and women bring different strengths to the workplace.

Professor Lee continuously advocates gender equality among Sunway Education Group's employees and students. She frequently participates in various local and international forums and conferences related to education, gender equality and women empowerment.



### Sunway sets up Centre for Planetary Health

The newly set-up Sunway Centre for Planetary Health aims is to provide a space to share knowledge about planetary health, translate academic discourse into easily accessible information, facilitate learning, and create solutions together with a broad range of stakeholders to effect lasting systemic change.

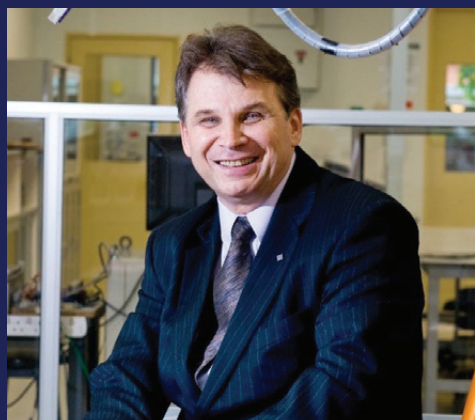
## TOP 150

2022



### Sunway University ranked within the top 150 Universities in Asia

Sunway University has climbed to position 121 in the recently released World University Rankings: Asia 2022. The University has risen in nearly all of its indicators with the number of "International Faculty", the number of "International Students" as well as "Employer Reputation" being ranked within the top 100; while the "International Research Networks" and "Faculty Student Ratio" within the top 125.



### First Malaysian representative elected to the European Academy of Sciences & Arts

Professor Serge Demidenko has become the first Malaysian representative elected to the European Academy of Sciences and Arts. The Academy is a non-governmental transnational and interdisciplinary learned society that recognises scholars in fields such as Humanities, Medicine, Arts, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Law and Economics, Technology and Environmental Sciences, and World Religions. It connects leading scientists, artists, and practitioners of governance dedicated to innovative research, interdisciplinary and transnational collaboration as well as the exchange and dissemination of knowledge.



# 10 SCIENTISTS LISTED IN WORLD'S TOP 2%



**Top row (L-R):** Professor Mohamed Kheireddine, Professor Pervaiz K Ahmed, Professor Sibrandes Poppema, Associate Professor Dr Adarsh Kumar Pandey and Professor Edward Tiekink

**Bottom row (L-R):** Professor Teo Kok Lay, Professor Agamutu Pariatamy, Professor Datin Dr Chia Yook Chin, Professor Saidur Rahman and Professor Yau Kok Lim

The ever-growing reputation of research originating from Malaysia continues to project our country as a forward thinking, problem solving nation of talented scientists. Over the past few years, the number of research papers published by Malaysian researchers has increased impressively, along with the volume of publications included in highly-cited lists.

Now, we can proudly claim to have a private university in Malaysia that not only has one or two researchers within the world's top 2% but an impressive 10.

A perfect 10 accurately describes the number of scientists from Sunway University who are listed in the top 2% of the most-cited scientists and academics in various disciplines from around the world by United States based Stanford University.

This group of 10 comprises Professor Sibrandes Poppema, Professor Edward Tiekink, Professor Saidur Rahman, Professor Mohamed Kheireddine, Professor Yau Kok Lim, Associate Professor Dr Adarsh Kumar Pandey, Professor Teo Kok Lay, Professor Agamutu Pariatamy, Professor Datin Dr Chia Yook Chin, as well as Professor Pervaiz K Ahmed who recently joined Sunway University. By January 2022, two more scientists that are listed in this top 2% will be joining.

With the latest addition of these highly cited scientists, Sunway University has more career researchers, listed in the World's Top 2% Scientists produced by Stanford University, than any other private institutions in Malaysia.

Sunway University's group of research pioneers are dedicated to creating positive research impacts in various sectors, such as engineering and technology, medical and health sciences, computing and information systems, business and management.

"The Stanford list comprises the top 2% of scientists and is based on the number of citations their publications have achieved in their specific field of research, either over their entire career or in recent years. The presence of such successful researchers in our institution serves as an inspiration for young scientists," said Professor Sibrandes Poppema, President of Sunway University.

One of the key reasons for Sunway University's rise to the pinnacle of research within Malaysia is its international collaborations with colleagues in some of the world's leading international universities like the University of Cambridge, Harvard University, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).



# AMAZING OUTDOOR CONVOCATION CEREMONY FOR OVER 600 STUDENTS



Sunway University held the momentous convocation ceremonies at the Sunway Lagoon Amphitheatre, honouring the achievement and resiliency of over 600 graduates, officially commemorating the graduates' achievements through all the challenges this unprecedented period has created.

The graduation was officiated by YBhg. Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Jeffrey Cheah AO, the Chancellor, along with the presence of Professor Elizabeth Lee, Chief Executive Officer of Sunway Education Group, and Professor Sibrandes Poppema, President of Sunway University. Professor Andy Schofield, Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University was also present virtually to deliver the congratulatory address.

Among us there was the Professor Andy Schofield Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University who delivered a virtual congratulatory address. "We at Lancaster University are committed to producing the graduates that Malaysia and its neighbours need, to fulfil their ambitions to grow economically, to be inclusive socially, and to bring lasting prosperity to all of their citizens in their years to come."



Despite the pandemic, the time-honoured tradition in Sunway of bringing notable and influential speakers to address, inspire and congratulate the graduating class remains strong.

Throughout the four days, over 600 graduates celebrated their success at four ceremonies, with nearly 1,200 family members and friends cheering them on.

With a capacity of 2100 at the Lagoon Amphitheatre all of the attendees enjoyed the benefits of a spacious safe environment, with the added comfort & reassurance of a splendid outdoor location. The unique setting helped make the occasion an unforgettable convocation experience.

The convocation ceremonies comprised of students from School of Arts, School of Engineering and Technology, School of Hospitality and Service Management, School of Interdisciplinary Studies, School of Medical and Life Sciences, School of Mathematical Sciences and Sunway University Business School.

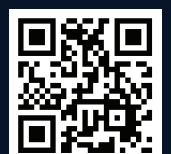
**"As you make your way through life, I hope you will do so with integrity as your guide, humility as your virtue and the pursuit of excellence as your choice. And I trust you will help create a brighter, more inclusive and sustainable future for all under the Malaysian sun.,"** said Tan Sri Dato' Seri Jeffrey Cheah as he congratulated the graduates and highlighted the institution's constant strive to create an environment that encourages learning, sparks great ideas, and promotes innovation as well as sustainable solutions for the future.

"Our Alumni community hopes that you will stay connected and have many future engagements with us. May I thank you for choosing Sunway University for your studies and wish you every success in the future – and rest assured that your "Alma Mater" will always be there for you," said Professor Elizabeth Lee as she welcomed all graduates to be part of the Sunway Alumni Community and the very best wishes for their future endeavours towards the end of the virtual graduation ceremony.

The convocation ceremonies, held over four days, were the culmination of a time in each graduate's life unlike any other. Perhaps bachelor's degree in Financial Analysis graduate and one of the valedictorians Evelyn Tay said it best: "As we have heard about a million times now, we are living in unprecedented times. All of our crazy roller coaster rides have been unprecedented, including this new format of the outdoor graduation ceremony in an amphitheatre, never seen before in the history of Sunway University. Because let's be honest, every batch that graduates from Sunway University are special, which makes us 'A Class Above'."



Watch the convocation highlights here:



## SUNWAY UNIVERSITY WINS AWARD IN CISCO APJC DEVNET INNOVATORS CHALLENGE

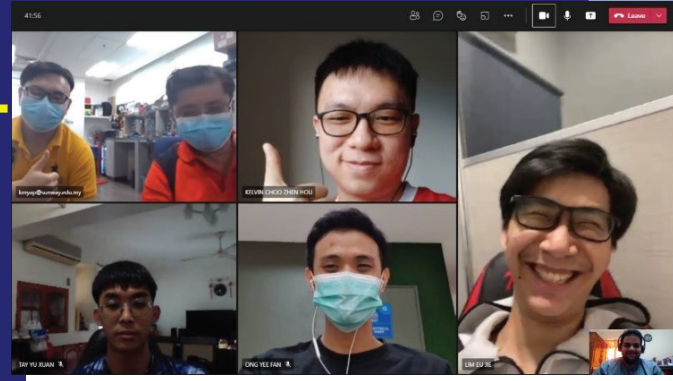
The Cisco APJC DevNet Innovators event was a two-stage challenge opened to Cisco's customers, partners, and students. In this challenge, the participants would need to ideate and develop new use cases where the power of Cisco programmability can help to reach the desired business outcome and bring the idea to life by developing a prototype utilising the resources from Cisco.

Human-Machine Collaboration (HUMAC) Sunway University is honoured to be invited by Cisco Malaysia to represent ASEAN in this event. The Head of HUMAC, Associate Professor Dr Yap Kian Meng led two teams namely SunwayA and SIoT.

Sunway Team A had Abdurraheem Joomye from BSc (Hons) Information Technology (Computer Networking and Security) as Team Leader, Ong Yee Fan from BSc (Hons) Information Technology (Computer Networking and Security), and Tay Yu Xuan from BSc (Hons) Information Technology (Computer Networking and Security).

SIoT had Chew Zhe Zhi from BSc (Hons) Information Technology (Computer Networking and Security) as Team Leader, Kelvin Choo Zhen Hou from BSc (Hons) Information Technology (Computer Networking and Security), and Lim Eu Jie from BSc (Hons) in Computer Science.

SIoT has successfully secured a categorical award – "Fresh Energy" with their creation entitled "Disaster warning system with climate



monitoring", from 26 competitors which consist of technology giants, government departments, and famous universities around the world. This included China Unicorn, Wipro, Tata Consultancy Service, Fujitsu, Nagoya University and Busan City Hall.

It is also worth mentioning that Sunway Team B, with their creation entitled "Disaster warning system with climate monitoring", has successfully secured a categorical award – "Fresh Energy".

The main objective of this project is to create a wireless disaster warning system. The module will power on the LED, buzzer, and display warning messages when smoke is present during a disaster. The module will also send the warning messages using a bot in Cisco Webex Teams. At the same time, the readings of the sensors can be monitored in real-time via an online dashboard.

## PROFESSOR LAU SIAN LUN AWARDED LANCASTER UNIVERSITY EDUCATION CONFERENCE 2021 PRIZE



Three colleagues from Sunway University were accepted to present their work at the Lancaster University Education Conference 2021. Among them, Professor Lau Sian Lun from School of Engineering and Technology (SET) was awarded the Education Conference Award, among other five awardees from Lancaster University, Blackpool & the Fylde College and University Academy 92. His oral presentation titled 'The good, the bad and the "surprises"' shared the results from an analysis study on students' feedback and perception on teaching

and learning experience throughout the pandemic, namely the impacted semesters in 2020. Co-authors of the work were Professor Alvin Ng Lai Oon (School of Medical and Life Sciences), Associate Professor Dr Sim Tze Ying (Center for American Education) and Professor Abhi Veerakumarasivam (School of Medical and Life Sciences).

The conference team members commended Professor Lau for going beyond 'observation' to undertaking and presenting rigorous qualitative research and demonstrating how the results of this research might feed into teaching practice going forward. The conference committee recognised the presentation as outstanding because the presented contents engaged well with the key conference themes of thinking backwards; looking forward. Apart from that, the study also demonstrated how learning is applied to practice and is able to articulate innovation and change. The discussions after the presentation with the track

audience were engaging and interesting to allow the authors to plan on follow up work.

Professor Lau was pleasantly surprised by the recognition, "I didn't expect to receive the award as my intention to join the Lancaster University Education Conference 2021 was to share our findings from the study carried out by my colleagues and me in 2020 in an international platform. I was looking forward to receiving feedback from my colleagues at Lancaster University and other international participants, and I have received positive and useful feedback. The award and recognition were indeed unexpected, and I am humbled by the positive words from the conference committee. On the other hand, I hope this award may also inspire my colleagues at Sunway University to continue to showcase the good work we do in Malaysia to an international crowd when the opportunity arises. The experience will be rewarding."



# SUNWAY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ARTS JOINS



Department of Art, Design and Media of the School of Arts at Sunway University is pleased to be the third member of Cumulus, the International Association of Universities and Colleges of Art, Design and Media, in Malaysia.

Cumulus is the only global association to serve art and design education and research. It is a forum for partnership and transfer of knowledge and best practices. Cumulus consists currently of 360 members from 63 countries.

As a member, Sunway University is part of an extensive network of design schools, including the Royal College of Art, Aalto University, Parsons School of Design, Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), and the University of Edinburgh.

By joining Cumulus, Sunway University is placing itself into a role of being part of the international discussion regarding the future of the arts and design in general and, precisely, the role of art programmes in helping to create that future.

School of Arts at Sunway University is also allowed to join with academics and students worldwide in various forums, conferences, and exhibitions to explore how art

and design have a greater social significance. Sunway University hopes to offer undergraduate and postgraduate students and staff the opportunities to work with talented people around the world, creating networks for research and exhibition.

Professor Dr Kenneth Feinstein, Head of Department of Art, Design and Media at Sunway University, said, "As members of Cumulus, we will be part of a network of leading art and design schools. Being a member will allow us to create student exchanges with other members. It will allow other schools to know what we are going through the cumulus website and newsletter. Cumulus also has two annual conferences. Being part of the network, we hope to encourage our students and faculty to take a proactive role in exhibition and publication. By increasing our profile internationally, the school will be able to attract more international students and staff."

Cumulus aims at building and maintaining a dynamic and flexible academic forum that would bring together top-level educational institutions from all parts of the world. Cumulus collaborates not only with institutions and organizations from the field of art, design, and media; the encouragement of co-operation with industry and business is essential as well.





# CREATING A FUTURE-READY WORKFORCE

by Sugunah Verumandy  
Head of Human Resources, HSBC Malaysia

The world around us is changing faster than ever before; economies and industries are being reshaped, more sustainable practices are being embraced, customer expectations are constantly growing, new innovations are changing the ways of living and all these are being accelerated by rapid technology changes.

For organisations, this would mean a change in workforce strategy which includes developing the right skills so we are well equipped to create opportunities for our customers, communities and colleagues.

That's why, companies like HSBC is investing in learning, upskilling and development to ensure all our employees have access to opportunities. Among the latest in offering is our 'Digital Black Belt Development Programme'.

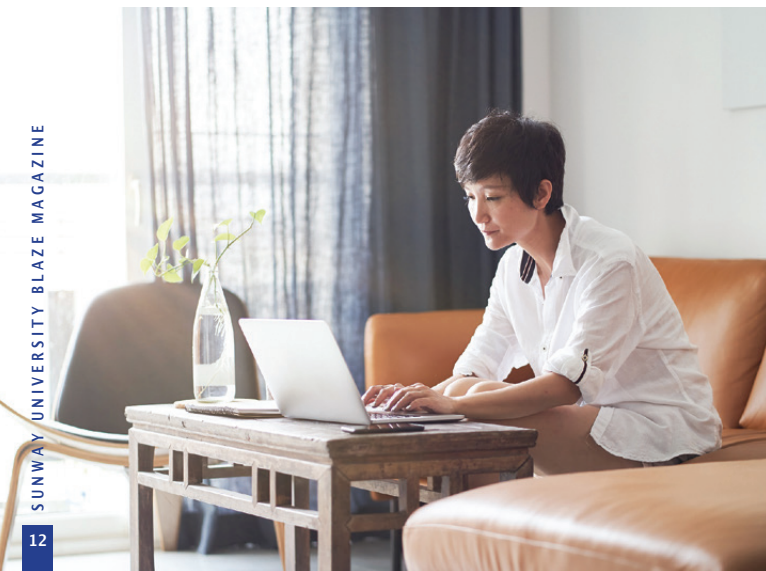
HSBC Malaysia's newly established 'Digital Black Belt Development Programme' was launched to the first group of HSBC employees this year as part of its larger commitment to support the country's workforce to develop skills for the jobs of today and tomorrow. The digital upskilling initiative is in line with the bank's focus on

preparing employees in Malaysia to be ready to embrace the workplace of the future.

New trends and technologies continue to change the way we live and work and adopting a mindset of continuous learning and thriving will enable us to be ready for what's next.

"At HSBC, we're investing in the skills and technology we need across our global network to build a sustainable future. Acquiring these competencies will be critical to developing the workforce within the country and facilitating the growth of our people," said Sugunah Verumandy, Head of HR, HSBC Malaysia. "We are harnessing our collective capacity to innovate and find new opportunities to shape the future both inside our organisation and in wider society."

The 'Digital Black Belt Programme' provides employees with education and training that is essential to re-skill the workforce. The aim of this initiative is to equip employees with the skills they can use in the future to create compounded value and impact for themselves and the organisation as well as in their current roles.







'The Digital Black Belt Programme' which will be conducted virtually, comprises of three streams each with its respective cohort learning skills in – Data Analytics, Data Science and Automation & Machine Learning.

Sugunah added, "Our 'Digital Black Belt Programme' is focused on encouraging employees to innovate and apply a digital lens to everything that they do while finding new opportunities to shape the future both inside our organisation and in wider society. We believe that this will be fundamental to preparing our people for what comes next while enabling them to deliver a better experience for our customers."

**"For students who are entering the workforce, you will have a great opportunity to demonstrate existing digital skillsets and learn new offerings to co-create the workplace of the future. You will need to be agile and have a growth mindset coupled with the willingness to also reflect, adapt and thrive. Some key traits to ensure success in your careers are curiosity, innovation and collaboration – this will help you as your progress in your careers. It is also important to take ownership of your own development through projects and assignments that will provide you depth and breadth."**

**Sugunah Verumandy**  
Head of Human Resources, HSBC Malaysia



Learn more about HSBC Malaysia here: [www.hsbc.com.my](http://www.hsbc.com.my)





By **Prof Alvin Ng Lai Oon**,  
Department of Psychology,  
School of Medical and Life Sciences,  
Sunway University

# LIVING THE GOOD LIFE: PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

The concept of a “Good Life” is not new. It has been discussed and studied since ancient times, with philosophers and religious figures prescribing all sorts of spiritual and scientific approaches in the pursuit of happiness – to live the good life. Other than spiritual practices, many recommend a balanced life, while systematically studying who we are in relation to each other, and to the rest of the world. These inquiries led to various social developments and scientific discoveries, and eventually the birth of psychology as a scientific discipline in the late 1800s, combining mainly findings from physiology, evolution, and philosophy.

Unsurprisingly, psychology is usually associated with well-being, although more accurately, it is a scientific study of mind, brain and behaviour in all aspects of life. Nevertheless, psychology aims to answer age-old questions from ancient philosophies such as “what’s the nature of human nature?” and “can knowing human nature help us have a good life?” by applying scientific methods.

As a psychologist, I often get asked to give talks on psychology applied to well-being. A frequently asked question in my talks on mental health is, “Doctor, can you teach us how to live without stress?”

“I’m afraid not, but I can talk about stress management.”

“Isn’t that the same thing?”

“Not at all. Stress is always going to be there. It’s how you manage it that helps you get through life. Stress is natural and adaptive, and is not all that bad. You’d die pretty quickly if you had no stress whatsoever.”

Many people expect a ‘Good Life’ to mean a stress-free life. Too often, stress is associated with negativity, disorder and aversion. Poor old stress, having to live through such prejudice!

Stress can be good or bad – depending on how it is managed. Stress is like fire – it can destroy, but it can also build and give energy – depending on how you manage it. So, let’s be kind to stress. Let’s learn more about it so we can be familiar with it. The more familiar we are with stress, the easier it is to notice it and to do something about it. Psychology can teach us a lot about our emotions and how to manage them. Let’s investigate, rather than deviate.

Speaking of investigation, there have been tonnes of research carried out on the quality of life and the factors that contribute to it. One very significant factor is having good relationships. Longitudinal scientific research has consistently found that meaningful friendships are very highly correlated with quality of life – higher than health, wealth, job satisfaction, or personal achievements. Social health is a significant protective factor against perceived isolation, depression and suicide.

So how to have a good life? Have good friends and stay connected with them. Keep on making friends as you’ll lose some along the way (and that’s okay – it happens). Having friends around you helps provide a sense of security and safety. A community of friends is a safe and comfortable community. Community well-being contributes significantly to our individual well-being. Having family and friends around makes it easier for us to reach out when we need help.

If we look into ancient writings, we can find very similar advice from philosophers and religious personalities on the ‘Good Life’. Community is not merely part of spiritual life, but all of spiritual life. Ancient wisdom encourages living as part of a system, understanding how each of us affects each other. This is where moral and ethical guidelines come from. It is no wonder that contemporary social science researchers are finding evidence for such wisdom.

So, the moral of the story is: For a good life, make friends. Teach your children and other young ones how to make friends. It’s much more important than their grades at school. Friends can give you much more satisfaction than grades can. In fact, friends can even help you get the grades by helping you by being your study partner and supporting your learning. Friendship requires no grades anyway (if they do, they’re not worth the friendship).



“Surely there are other ways to have a good life according to psychological findings – why focus on having quality friends?”

Because data tells us social health trumps all other factors in predicting a good life. Plus making friends is a universal skill that we already have. It’s nothing fancy, and more importantly – free of charge!

We also know from research that those who are isolated, with little or no sense of belonging, and feel like a burden to society due to perceived rejection – are more likely to feel helpless, and hopeless to the point of depression and even suicide. What’s the opposite of this? Actual sense of belonging and relevance to society!

So, be kind, be a friend, connect with friends. Life is much better that way, especially in this pandemic. Stay home to stay safe, but stay connected to stay sane.



# THE GREAT RESET IN HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT EDUCATION: IDENTIFYING THE IMPLICATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

HALLMARK

By Professor Marcus L. Stephenson,  
Dean & Professor of Tourism and Hospitality  
Management, Sunway University

& Professor  
Peter Heard,  
Provost of Sunway  
University



Image from freepik.com

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, the tourism industry's contribution to gross domestic product has declined globally by 49.1% since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the Asia Pacific region having the highest decline of 53.7%. This region also accounted for around 34.1 million estimated job losses. Statista reports that hotel occupancy rates reduced dramatically worldwide in 2020.

Despite these gloomy facts, the green shoots of a recovery are emerging. The hospitality industry's future is bright, despite the present crisis there is an industry-based expectation that because significant national populations have not been able to consume the benefits of travel and hospitality for a substantial period, hospitality consumption will bounce back with vengeance. Various airline and hotel companies are already planning major recruitment drives.

The hospitality industry is adept at turning adversity into market advantage. For instance, the hotel sector has monopolised the domestic market through producing value-added staycation packages and restaurants had quickly advanced their takeaway services. Hospitality is a resilient industry and there are many skills requiring replication and development in hospitality education, instilling students with the values of imagination, open-mindedness, and resourcefulness.

Soft skills are the core competencies that individuals require for working successfully in the hospitality industry, and these skills are essential for career achievement. Soft skills are also vital to navigating challenging times, particularly critical thinking, emotional intelligence, responsiveness, and problem solving. Research from Harvard University, the Carnegie Foundation and Stanford Research Center indicated that 85% of job success is derived from soft skills

rather than technical skills. The combination of soft skills and technical know-how taught at university is thus the best insurance for having a productive career.

Education is one of the best investments in ensuring future prosperity for individuals and nations. Starting a diploma or degree now will mean that students are perfectly placed to fill vacancies in two to four years' time, when they graduate.

The pandemic has facilitated problematic scenarios for hospitality education to critically address. In revenue management, one challenge concerns how student learners deal with ways to ensure that hotels maximise revenue opportunities from each customer. Students should thus be astutely aware of how innovation and entrepreneurship are crucial for full-scale recovery, studying ways to increase revenue but at the same time being imbued with aspirations to change the hospitality industry landscape.

Hospitality education should not only consider a transformational change in the industry but also how students can be transformational leaders. The School of Hospitality and Service Management is sensitive to the current challenges faced by the industry, working towards ensuring that educational delivery emphasises ways forward at numerous progressive levels.

The Master in International Hospitality Management deals deeply with appropriate contemporary scenarios and potential industry-based solutions. One core competence to instil in the next generation of hospitality leaders is the capability of allowing the new and changing environment to constructively modify their behaviour patterns and thought processes.

As we emerge into the post-COVID world, the long-term future of the hospitality industry looks both bright and exciting.







# THE CAR OF THE FUTURE IN SEVEN STEPS



The BMW Group has had a long history of producing many iconic cars, some of which have gone on to define eras in automotive design. This cemented BMW as one of the most well-established premium brands in the world – one rich in its automotive design heritage. However, to arrive at any final design is no accident. Each step in the BMW design process is deliberate and measured – essential for the brand's future-focused orientation.

## 1. Looking Ahead: Identifying Trends

Drawing inspiration from a variety of sources, BMW designers have to understand, far in advance, what will be regarded as modern and cutting-edge in tomorrow's world – and how BMW customers' needs may have evolved by then.

## 2. A Question of Character: Hand-drawn Sketches

It begins with hand-drawn sketches – masterfully done within technical restrictions, such as the wheelbase, trunk volume or safety requirements. Available technological innovations need to be included in a way that conveys functionality, sensibility, and visual fascination at first sight.

## 3. Precision: Tape Drawings

Alongside the sketches, the designers draw their plans on a wall with a 1:1 scale in what is known as tape drawings. It helps illustrate not only the character but the real volume of the vehicle, just with a few striking lines, providing the perfect template for the next steps.

## 4. Virtual Experts: Digital Models

At this stage, state-of-the-art digital technologies come to play. From two-dimensional sketches, computer-aided styling (CAS) designers create a virtual three-dimensional vehicle. The use of Virtual Reality (VR) here also helps facilitate collaboration between departments and the design process.

## 5. Shaping: Clay Models

The form-finding process becomes three-dimensional with 1:1 scale clay models, consisting of a basic frame made of wood and metal that is coated by foam.

"It is a thrilling moment for me when you actually see the sketches in front of you as a complete entity – one that you can walk around," said exterior designer, Anders Thøgersen.

## 6. Internal View: Drawing the Interior Car Design

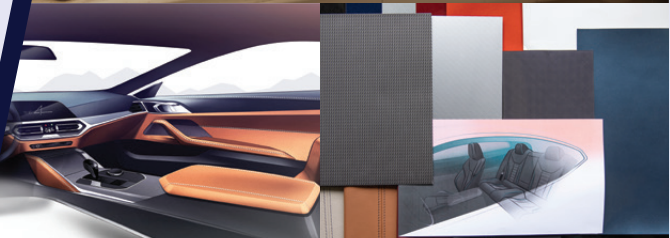
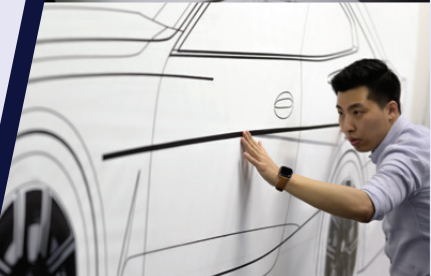
Interior designers sketch and refine their models alongside the exterior designers, also working with clay in the process. In so-called seat boxes, they make the entire interior come alive – from seats and details, to surfaces and materials.

"We aim to create an ambience for our customers that is modern, inviting and functional at the same time," said interior designer, Eva Günther.

## 7. Perfectionism: Fine-Tuning

BMW Design has a dedicated team for the detailed car design, colours and materials. Both on the exterior and the interior, these fine-tuning experts perfect all the elements down to hundredths of a millimetre. The close coordination among BMW's car designers, engineers, and production technicians is akin to a dance in perfect synchrony – as it should be when it comes to bringing a car of the future to life, today.

To learn more about BMW Design, visit <https://www.bmw.com/en/>







## A CONVERSATION WITH SELF MANOEUVRE YOUR LIFE WITH SELF-CARE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Dr Hariyati Shahrina Abdul Majid,  
Consultant Psychologist of MERCY Malaysia

In response to the devastating effect on the emotional and psychological well-being of the community due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Sunway University Philanthropy Office organised a webinar on 'A Conversation with Self: Manoeuvre Your Life with Self-Care for Mental Health' to raise awareness on mental health literacy. Professor Elizabeth Lee, CEO of Sunway Education Group delivered the welcome remarks highlighting the importance of self-care in maintaining a good mental well-being, especially during the pandemic.

The webinar was moderated by Ethan Ganes, a Psychology alumnus from the School of Medical and Life Sciences and Dr Hariyati Shahrina Abdul Majid, Consultant Psychologist of MERCY Malaysia shared her nuggets on self-care practices for a balanced mental health.

**We are all on social media all the time and have social media telling us the right way to self-care, with examples such as taking a nap and eating some marshmallows. It is a little hard to pin down what is self-care and where should we start. Could you tell us a little bit more about what exactly is self-care?**

Dr Hariyati: The common definition of self-care is that deliberate and intentional activity that you plan for yourself so that you are psychologically better, physically healthier, and more at peace with yourself. I usually see it as a gift to yourself. A lot of people when they think about giving someone a present, they consider the things that are valuable to them. The question is what do you gift yourself? In the 24 hours that you have in a day or the seven days a week that you have, how much time do you gift yourself so that you are able to do something that will enhance your physical health, improve your mental health, and carry out the tasks that you have as a student, lecturer or even as an administrator.

**Somebody once asked me, "How do I see my sleep as important? I keep seeing it as the thing that I give up." I thought this question was relevant, especially to us students. Maybe you can point out some red flags that tell us it is time to really push the brakes and do something about it.**

Dr Hariyati: I think the most important thing for you to remember is to be mindful and be aware of the changes that are happening to you. Sometimes it's difficult for us to detect thought patterns where we experience more stress, anxiety, negative emotions. But in the meantime, we can observe or others can also observe behavioural changes in us. So, one way of identifying what are the early warning signs would be behavioural indicators. For instance, you enjoy your meal, and you like what you are having for dinner today, but if suddenly you find yourself not having the appetite to eat. Sometimes you do not recognise that, but your friends and your family members do. They may come up to you and point out that you have not been eating well the past few days and this is very important feedback for you to reflect on. Sleeping is a natural way for us to re-energise the resources that we have depleted during the day and that is the time where we gain back our resources to be able to meet the demands that we are going to be facing the next day. All in all, it is good if you yourself realise the behavioural changes and remind yourself to acknowledge the changes and do something about them. This is part of self-care.

**What should one do when motivation is running lower while struggling with studies and not prioritising self-care at all?**

Dr Hariyati: There is a difference between being exhausted and tired; being tired is when you feel refreshed after you sleep for a while, whereas exhaustion means the depletion of your energy such that you cannot continue to think about what you need to do. It is also worrying when you have thoughts such as, "Why should I do this? No matter how hard I work at it will still be the same". You have become cynical and disillusioned; you know you promised things but were not delivered, you feel that you are not being efficient, and you do not see any improvement, yet you are still facing the walls. I think it is time for you then to take that step back or seek help and get someone to have a conversation with and find that intrinsic motivation. To get back your motivation, identify both these strings: Motivation and the process of reigniting the passion. Get support from the people you trust to help you bounce back or prepare for a crisis that may happen in future, and speak to someone who may be able to appreciate what you are going through. Then, you may communicate with them and see things from different perspectives.

# Evening Chat with AMBASSADOR OF ITALY TO MALAYSIA, H.E. CRISTIANO MAGGIPINTO



The serendipity of exploring cultures and countries should not be halted by travel restrictions and the pandemic. Moving things offline to online, the Sunway Cultural Exchange (SCE) team of Student LIFE features different countries and regions with exclusively-curated monthly content on social media to bring the world closer (virtually) to the Sunway community.

In line with the featured country of Italy in July, SCE collaborated with the Embassy of Italy in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for a live evening chat with H.E. Cristiano Maggipinto, Ambassador of Italy to Malaysia. It was an interactive chat between Khalil bin Khairuddin, a student from Sunway University, Joey Lim, Cultural Exchange Coordinator from SCE and H.E Cristiano Maggipinto.

### The life of an ambassador

Having embraced his diplomatic career in 1989 and with rich experiences working in several vital roles across the world for the Italian embassy, Ambassador Maggipinto shared his diplomatic career journey in the Italian context. Referencing the diplomatic sector in general, in addition to the understanding of a country through books and experiences, Ambassador Maggipinto shared two important qualities to be an ambassador: The capability to observe things and the capability to listen.

**“...to have the possibility and the capability to listen... and to observe everybody, the different situations, the different institutions, the culture, the civil society...” – H.E. Cristiano Maggipinto**

### Embassy in the new normal

Ambassador Maggipinto said his day-to-day life as an ambassador revolves around political, cultural and consular matters. The team got to understand the role of the Embassy of Italy here in Malaysia, not only to the Italian community in Malaysia (which numbers around 1,100) but also to the Malaysian community. Ambassador Maggipinto shared about the embassy's current situation during the pandemic as well as initiatives to move forward in the new normal with projects such as Estate all'italiana/Summer the Italian Way 2021 and Project Fragilit .

### Malaysia - Italy

In addition to the striking similarities geographically, culturally and economically between both Malaysia and Italy pointed out by Ambassador Maggipinto, one cannot miss is both nations' passion for food. Laksa Johor is one of the ambassador's favourite Malaysian dishes since he tried it during his first month in Malaysia and he has loved that dish ever since.

Another cultural aspect that was noticed by Ambassador Maggipinto after years here in Malaysia would be the kindness of Malaysians. In his words, “Malaysians are always very kind and always interested to know more about you. It is not only a capability but a will to try to get in contact with other people. This is very important and great...”

Assuage your curiosity about life as an ambassador in Malaysia by watching the full version of the live session on the Sunway Cultural Exchange Facebook page.

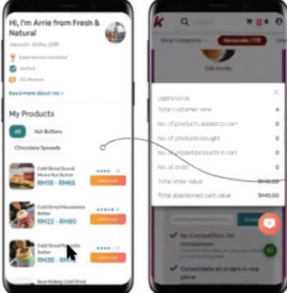




# INDUSTRY SHARING SESSION WITH KRAVVE.CO



## ② “Shopify For Food” (SaaS Tool).




Kravve provides micro-sellers a **“Personal Online Shop”** with full e-commerce capability that is worth RM2000 - RM10,000 in market price at 97% lower cost.

This helps automate the selling process end-to-end, **making 16 steps process into just 2 steps**, so that moms and pops can start making an income from their home kitchen easily.

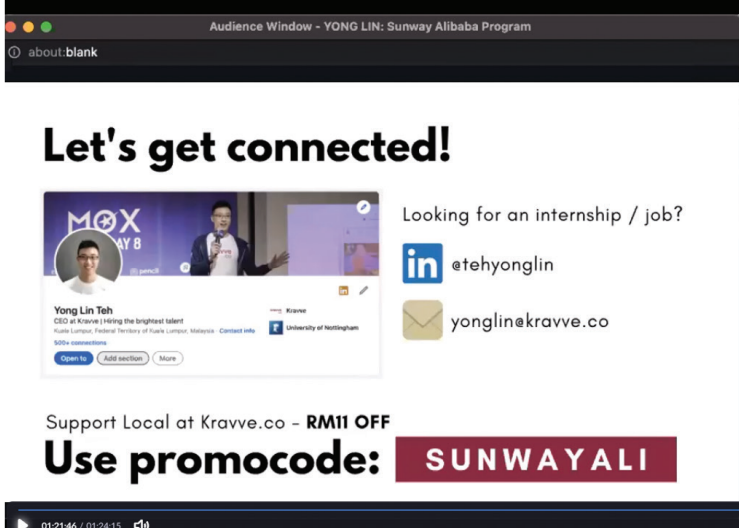
With this, it helps them to offload their entire business operations so they can focus on what they do best - making products.

Getting sales



Yong Lin Teh

Mr. Augustine Wong, the Associate Dean (Engagement and Internationalisation) of the School of Arts, moderated the sharing session.



Let's get connected!

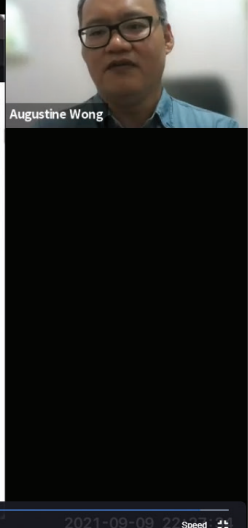
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Augustine Wong

The Digital Economy subject is a subject offered under the Centre for American Education to year-two degree students across various schools as a free elective, including the Sunway University Business School and School of Engineering and Technology. Lecturers who are teaching the subject are a group of lecturers from different schools and faculties who have been certified by the Alibaba GDT Network through a series of training. In order to enhance the learning experience of the students, the lecturers decided to engage with several industry professionals to come up with a series of industrial sharing session.

The first speaker for the series was Mr Teh Yong Lin, the CEO and co-founder of Kravve.co. Kravve is a digital marketplace that empowers local mom-and-pop to make a living selling food and groceries from home. Teh shared how he embarked on his entrepreneurship journey with the simplest yet ambitious vision – which is to help the local mom-and-pop to sell online.

“It is a very tedious and complicated process that consists of 16 steps to sell online,” said Teh in his sharing.

“What if, Kravve is able to allow our sellers to only do two steps out of the 16-steps process? We want to enable them to go digital and to be able to make a living selling food directly from their homes.”

The sharing session was followed by a Q&A session moderated by one of the lecturers of the subject, Mr Augustine Wong, Associate Dean (Engagement and Internationalisation) of the School of Arts. When asked about important advice he has for aspiring entrepreneurs, Teh answered, “It is very important to understand why do you want to start a business. Do not start a business if you are doing it because of money because it wouldn’t last. If you have a purpose to fulfil, then there might be a better chance of running the business successfully.”

Although the session serves as a platform for students of the Digital Economy subject to engage with industry professionals, the session was also attended by more than 200 students and staff across Sunway Education Group.



## A JOURNEY OF LOVE THROUGH TURMOIL



A typical story may be one where you meet your partner in university and to marry that same person, would be special. What makes Gordon and Jaslynn's story unique is how they share a home, a life, and a DNA match that allowed him to donate his kidney to her.

Gordon Ling Fu Chur and Jaslynn Tay Ivy both remembered how and when they first met – it was their orientation day back in 2006 at Auditorium 7, Sunway University College (now Sunway College). Gordon went into detail, remembering how he first noticed her – the girl arriving late to orientation and getting everyone's attention in a purple top, black pants, and sneakers. Both alumni of Bsc (Hons) Multimedia Systems had the same classes since their first semester.

"There was one lecturer, her name is Lim Fung Ching, she kept teasing us as a couple through our very first class. We didn't even know each other yet. But then, tadaa! Years later, we now have a kid. I guess you could say she was our matchmaker."





The couple began dating during their second year – with no canopy walk available to head to Sunway Pyramid at the time. They found joy in exploring every nook and cranny of the college building instead. After graduation, they continued their exploration into the working world. Gordon, who was editing videos even before college, is now a Commercial and Documentary Director. He started running his own production company, Reanimated Studio, in 2012 and now has over a hundred clients and projects. Recently, one of his documentaries, "Portrait of the Lion," was selected for Cannes Short Film Festival. Meanwhile, Jaslynn did her second degree in Early Childhood and Education, received her Master's in E-Learning, and worked as a kindergarten teacher for six years.

Fast forward to 2013, they got married. In 2015, they were expecting their daughter, Caitlyn. Things were going well until Jaslynn's second trimester where she started bleeding while at work. She rushed to the hospital, called Gordon, and consulted a gynaecologist. They found nothing wrong and were assured that the baby was fine. However, Jaslynn's blood pressure was very high. A blood test later showed her creatinine was over 400 – normal levels should range between 40 to 70. After more tests, Jaslynn was diagnosed with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD). As heartbreaking as it was to be diagnosed with CKD, they were more heartbroken when many advised them to abort the baby.

### Keeping Strong

Love kept Gordon and Jaslynn going through the whole turmoil. The couple refused any suggestions of abortion and faced hospital after hospital rejecting their case. They did not stop until they finally approached Hospital Kuala Lumpur (HKL) – the one hospital that accepted them. HKL also encouraged them to keep the baby as it could have been harder for Jaslynn to get pregnant again with her kidney problem.

Throughout the rest of her pregnancy, Jaslynn went through blood dialysis three times a week. At 34 weeks, Jaslynn had to go for an emergency C-section to ensure the health of both mother and baby. Only 1.75kg, half of the average newborn weight, Caitlyn was rushed to the Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU). Despite the early birth, Caitlyn, the

bright and cheerful girl she is today, was strong since inception and only had to be incubated for less than 24 hours.

### The Perfect Match

Although the pregnancy and delivery went smoothly, Jaslynn was still suffering from CKD. When you think of how a couple should match, you think of personalities, shared interests, and goals in life. For Gordon and Jaslynn, they also have an 85% match for a successful kidney transplant. Not wanting to make any rushed decisions, the couple took time to ensure that Caitlyn would be well taken care of and was old enough to understand the situation.

Once they saw that Caitlyn was understanding and strong, Gordon began going for health check-ups to prepare for the transplant from late 2018 until the middle of 2019. Although the success rate of kidney transplant procedures is high, it is still rare and difficult to find a suitable match or even a suitable and willing donor. When the tests were finally complete and Gordon was deemed healthy with both kidneys functioning almost perfectly, the hospital then set the surgery date for 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

"Through the whole process, no one was against it. The only person against it was Jaslynn herself because she didn't want me to sacrifice myself. But if I don't do this, then who?"

### Life After Surgery

The transplant was a success! There were no complications during the surgery, and Jaslynn's body accepted Gordon's kidney and functioned well. The couple were both discharged from the hospital within ten days and took December to recover while Caitlyn spent her school holidays with her grandparents.



As a kidney transplant is not a cure for kidney failure, Jaslynn is still susceptible to infections or diseases. Despite being immunosuppressed, Jaslynn can lead a routine and better life than before the surgery. She no longer has to do dialysis, can eat better, and most importantly, take care of Caitlyn herself. Gordon is also living as normal and is encouraged to be more active as usual continuously. As a family, they created vlogs and videos together on Gordon's YouTube channel, including Caitlyn as the adorable voice talent.

"We can never be prepared for whatever is in front of us. We have to be ready to face it. To always be planning and getting ready is not always relevant. It's most important not to rush into decisions. A quote that I live by is, 'A moment of neglect can be a lifetime of regret.'"

Have an alumni story to share? Reach out to the Sunway Alumni Relations team via [alumni@sunway.edu.my](mailto:alumni@sunway.edu.my), as we would love to hear from you!



# ALUMNI *on the move* >>

## CHIN JIE EN

Bsc (Hons) Business Management

*Founder and Managing Director, Happy 2U*



I started my online shoe business when I was 15 years old. Upon graduating, my company managed to grow the brand to have 126,000 followers on social media and one outlet that supported our omnichannel strategically. In 2019, I was lucky enough to be selected to participate in the Alibaba Netpreneur Training Malaysia Programme, a joint initiative by Alibaba Business School, Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC), Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade), and SME Corporation Malaysia (SME Corp Malaysia). During the 10 days of intensive training in the Alibaba HQ in HangZhou, together with all the business leaders in Malaysia, I gained a lot of experience and valuable knowledge, especially in Digital Transformation.

Coming back to my time with Sunway, I truly appreciate the sharing of experience from my beloved lecturers. When I first started, I ventured into my business without proper business knowledge such as business law, human resource management and more. By applying real-world scenarios into the concept or syllabus, my

lecturers helped me to better prepare myself in overcoming the work-life challenges upon leaving Sunway.

I still connect with the lecturers to ask for their opinion whenever I stumble upon issues with my business. Setting up the team, choosing the right people, selling the right product, I would not be who I am today without all the lecturers' guidance.

## KEILA PUTRIKAKALIH HERAWAN

BSc in International Hospitality Management

*Business Development Manager, Everplate Kitchens Indonesia*



If I could sum up my Sunway journey, it would be 'challenging yet extremely rewarding'! Born and raised in Indonesia, going to Malaysia in 2013 was the first time I went abroad to live independently. Staying out of my comfort zone, it took me some time to adjust to the new environment. However, the University and the people made it easy for me. Sunway University will always be my second home.

To this day, I keep close contact with many of my classmates. Zar Chi from Myanmar and Ruby from Vietnam were the two classmates who became my best friends for life. Although we live apart in three different countries, we always check in on each other through video calls.

My journey at Sunway University has prepared me to face the world. The skills, knowledge, and training experience that I received while studying definitely helped me build my career. Meeting people from different backgrounds has also expanded my network and horizon. From experience, I can say that networking does wonders. Not only can you learn many things by exchanging information and perspectives with other people, but it will also open more opportunities for you.





## JAGATHISH VELMUNIGAN

BSc (Hons) Information System

*Regional Manager II APEX Engineering, Grab*

My mother used to say, “Is this computer going to put food on your table? Take your books now!” 18 years later, I can proudly say, “Dearest mom, yes, that very computer puts food on my table and a shelter over my head.” The passion I had towards technology since young has moulded me to be who I am today.

I started my career journey as an intern in a company called MyTeksi, now known as Grab. Back then, MyTeksi was a start-up company – not many people knew about it and there weren’t many guides to work with. Once my internship was over, my manager waited nine months for me to complete my studies and hired me as an Associate Engineer in 2016. In 2017, I got promoted to be a Support Engineer. In 2018, I became the lead and was required to travel around Southeast Asia to train and set up new teams. Consequently, in 2019 and 2020, I was also promoted, and I am currently holding the position of Regional Manager II APEX Engineering. There are three teams consisting of 20 people altogether, working in eight different countries under my supervision. I was also honoured with the Grab CEO Award, given by Grab founder Anthony Tan. This award is for Grabbers who have exemplified Grab's company culture and principles and consistently gone the extra mile.

It obviously wasn't a smooth sailing pathway towards where I am now. I've had many obstacles and challenges throughout the way. Nevertheless, those failures have always made me a stronger person and I am proud of the person I have become. To students, work hard and grab the opportunity that is given without hesitation. Don't give up easily and always remember there's a light at the end of the tunnel.

## TEE SHUET YING

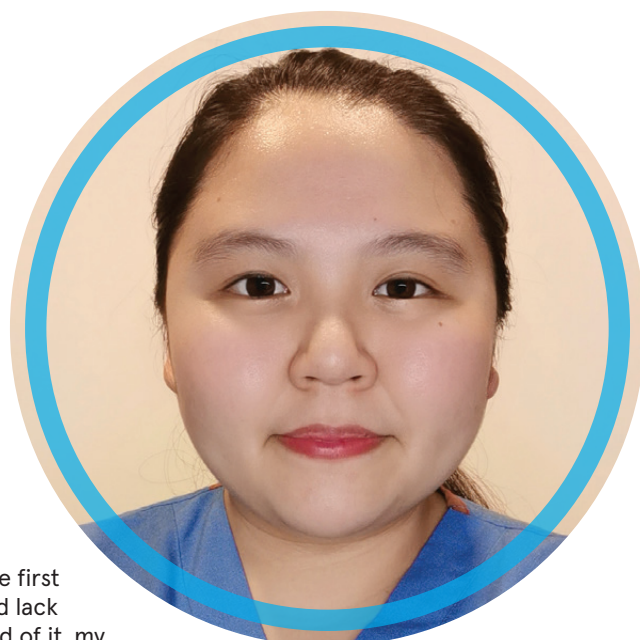
Diploma in Nursing

*Staff Nurse, Sunway Medical Centre*

Three years, which may be a short period for some, is the duration in which my lecturers and clinical instructors moulded me into someone who is trusted with lives. Beginning my first week of classes, the common question asked was “Why do you want to be a nurse?” During my secondary school years, I was involved in first aid for my extracurricular activities. The feeling of knowing what to do to give treatment and help others gave me a sense of satisfaction and the passion to dive into becoming a nurse.

During the initial period of the COVID-19 pandemic, I was deployed to the emergency department for three months. As with the new norm, face masks and PPE (personal protective equipment) were mandatory as the emergency department is the first line for screening patients from COVID. Due to the pandemic and lack of manpower, my shifts would go on for 12 hours – and by the end of it, my scrub suit would be soaked. I am however thankful for the opportunity as I've learned skills I would not have gained elsewhere.

The journey from becoming a student nurse to now a staff nurse, I realised that attitude is important in the path to success. The eagerness to learn is important especially during hands-on hospital attachments as only we, ourselves, are the ones to make the leap in progressing our skills.





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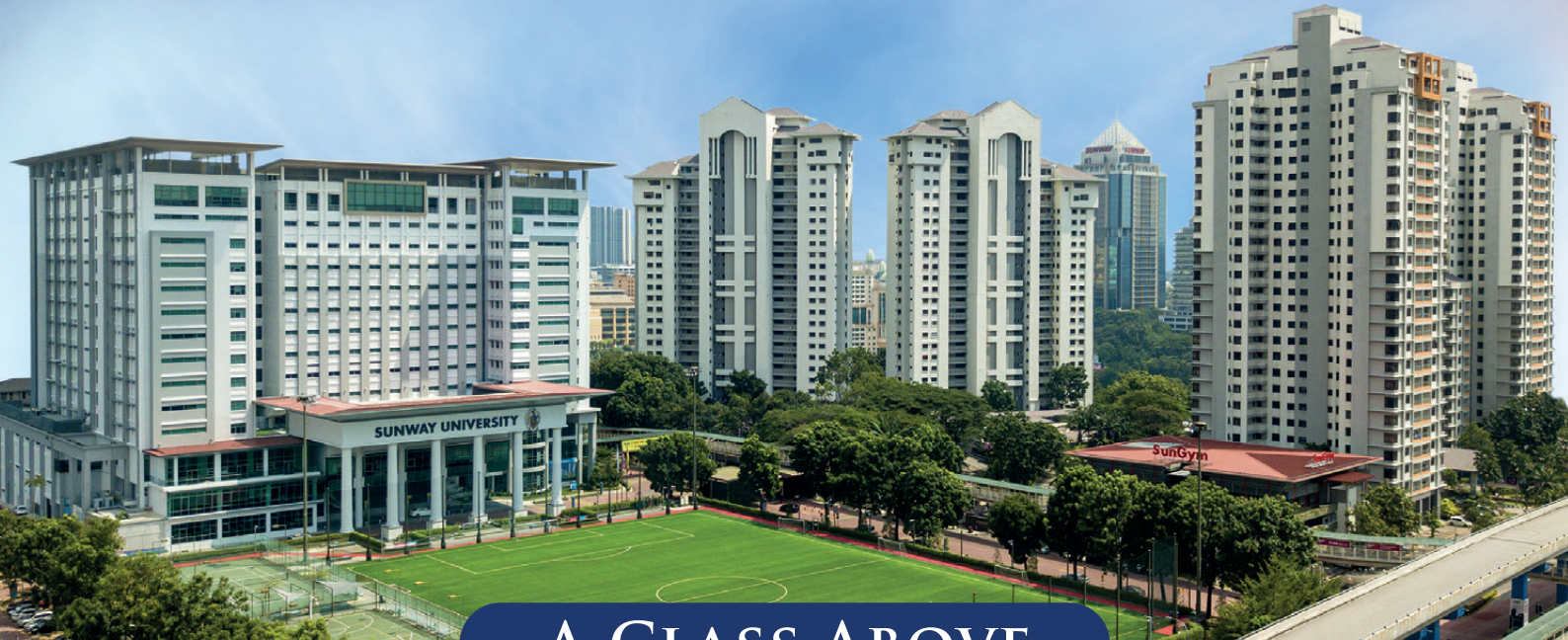
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